

February 11, 2014

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**Reviewing Juvenile Indigent Defense System**

To ensure that youths charged with crimes in the Los Angeles County (County) delinquency courts are treated fairly and equally when, for conflict reasons, only one youth defendant is represented by the Public Defender, and the other youth(s) are not similarly represented. For example, an alarming number of youth defendants have mental health and/or learning disabilities that, if properly assessed, could or should factor into the disposition of their juvenile criminal matter. Juvenile defendants are children at-risk. Undeniably, juveniles with mental health issues and learning disabilities need to be assessed rather than spend years in and out of court systems undiagnosed. Understanding these and other challenges that occur within the current system of juvenile indigent defense is an important step in protecting the constitutional rights of juvenile defendants. Consequently, the Board of Supervisors has a responsibility to review the current system for providing representation in the juvenile delinquency courts and determine if there are alternative ways to address any disparities that exist.

- MORE -

MOTION

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

- 1) Direct the Chief Executive Officer, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller, to hire an outside consultant to conduct an analysis of the County's juvenile indigent defense system that should include the following:
  - a. A summary of the resources available to attorneys in the Los Angeles County Public Defender and court appointed indigent defense attorneys to assist them in representing juvenile clients (including, but not limited to, Attorneys, Social Workers, Resource Attorneys, Deputies in Charge, Investigators, Administrative Support, WIC 730 Evaluators, and WIC 317(e) Education Attorneys);
  - b. A summary of the rate at which Public Defenders and panel attorneys utilize the resources identified in section (a);
  - c. A comparative analysis of the itemized per-case costs borne by the Public Defender, the Alternate Public Defender, and juvenile panel attorneys;
  - d. A review of the methods of specialized training, continuing legal education, supervision, mentoring and support, evaluation, compensation / incentive systems, accountability, and quality assurance employed by the Public Defender, the Alternate Public Defender, and juvenile panel attorneys;
  - e. A review of the methods of specialized training, continuing legal education, supervision, mentoring and support, evaluation, compensation

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**  
**FEBRUARY 11, 2013**  
**PAGE 3**

/ incentive systems, accountability, and quality assurance recommended by national standards;

- f. A review of the compensation models and systems for juvenile indigent defense contracts in other California counties; and
  - g. A comparative analysis of the juvenile cases represented by the Public Defender, the Alternate Public Defender (in the Lancaster juvenile courts), and juvenile panel attorneys, which are transferred to adult criminal court pursuant to WIC 707(a) and (b); and
- 2) Direct the Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Board in 60 days on proposed recommendations to improve the current system for consideration by the Board.

## ##